

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, and 11-22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9, 16, and 17 are amended. No new matter is added. This Amendment presumes prior entry of the Amendment After Final Rejection filed March 15, 2006.

Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 21 and 22 are allowed in the March 30, 2006 Office communication.

Claims 9, 10, 15, 17, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,064,847 to Iwamatsu et al. (Iwamatsu) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,930,438 to Demizu et al. (Demizu); claims 1-3, 8, 16, 18, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Iwamatsu in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,495,322 to Wada et al. (Wada) and in further view of Demizu; claims 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view Iwamatsu, Wada, and Demizu and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,809,386 to Iwata; and claims 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Iwamatsu in view Demizu and further in view of Iwata. The rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Applicant respectfully submits that none of the applied references either individually or in combination disclose or suggest that a bias is applied to the removing member and the developer-carrying member so as to attract the electrically-charged nonmagnetic single-component developer from the developer-carrying member onto the removing member, as recited in independent claims 1, 9, 16, and 17.

In the March 30, 2006 Office communication, it is alleged that the bias voltage Vd of Iwamatsu corresponds to the bias as recited in the claims 1, 9, 16, and 17. However, the bias voltage Vd of Iwamatsu is supplied to reset member 44 to eliminate and remove the static charge from the toner (see e.g., col. 9, lines 16-22). That is, the bias voltage Vd of Iwamatsu is not applied to the removing member and the developer-carrying member to attract the

electrically-charged nonmagnetic single-component developer from the developer-carrying member onto the removing member.

Instead, the reset member 44 of Iwamatsu is pressed onto the developing roller 41 with an appropriate pressure in the same manner as the blade 43, and allowed to static-eliminate and remove toner to be recovered after a developing operation, with a bias voltage Vd from the power-supply circuit 14 being supplied thereto (Fig. 1; col. 12, lines 1-14 of Iwamatsu). There is no bias voltage being applied to the reset member 44 to attract the toner onto the reset member from the developing roller 41.

Further, the plate-shaped elastic member used as the reset member 44 is a non-conductive material (e.g., nylon, PET, PTFE, or polyurethane; col. 12, lines 7-13). Although a base material added to the elastic member is an electric-resistance adjusting material (i.e., carbon black), the base material is used to provide the appropriate electric resistance to eliminate the static charge. Nowhere in Iwamatsu is it disclosed or suggested that a bias voltage is applied to the reset member 44 to attract the toner from the developing roller 41 onto the reset member 44.

In fact, the opposite occurs. That is, the reset member 44 of Iwamatsu eliminates the static charge and separates the toner from the developing roller 41 (col. 11, lines 59-63). Because the reset member 44 separates the toner from the developing roller 41 so that the toner can be recovered into the developer vessel 40, the toner is not attracted onto reset member 44. If we are to assume the Office Action position, which Applicant traverses, the toner would build-up on the reset member 44 causing the reset member 44 to apply an inappropriate pressure onto the developing roller 41. This is contrary to the teachings of Iwamatsu and would cause the reset member 44 to be ineffective in separating the toner from the developing roller 41 (see e.g., col. 11, line 59-line 22, col. 12). Thus, Iwamatsu's bias voltage does not correspond to the bias as recited in independent claims 1, 9, 16, and 17.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons as well as the reasons stated in the filed March 15, 2006, Amendment After Final Rejection, none of the applied references individually or in combination disclose or suggest the subject matter of claims 1, 9, 16, and 17, the references cannot render obvious the subject matter of claims 2, 4-8, and 18 depending from claim 1, the subject matter of claims 11-15 and 19 depending from claim 9, and the subject matter of claim 20 depending from 16, for the reasons discussed with respect to claims 1, 9, 16, and 17 and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of claims 1, 2, 4-9, and 11-20 be withdrawn. The rejections of claims 3 and 10 are rendered moot by the cancellation of these claims. Claims 21 and 22 are indicated as allowed in the March 30, 2006 Office Communication.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination

Date: April 13, 2006

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